

Stalin, Luthakate  
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# The Anti-Soviet Campaign in the G.F.R.

OBSERVER

A FLASHBACK to the Third Reich. The place: Berlin. The time: February 18, 1943. The Sportpalast is packed with nazis come to hear Goebbels. A past master at rabble-rousing, he works up his audience by shooting questions at them, demanding: "Answer me, yes or no?" The questions are formulated so as to elicit an affirmative reply.

Tension mounts from question to question. When he has whipped up his audience to the point of frenzy, Goebbels cries:

"Do you want total war? Answer me, yes or no?"

And thousands of throats roar: "Yes!"

"What idiots!" Goebbels says to his associates as he descends from the platform. "Had I asked them to jump down from the third floor they would have shouted 'Yes'."

The nazi propagandists knew how to dupe and bamboozle the public. The entire home policy of the nazi state was based on a combination of mass terror and high-pressure indoctrination. Both the old and the young were subjected to constant brainwashing aimed at turning them into obedient executors of Hitler's criminal plans. The keynote of this propaganda was anti-Communism designed to imbue the millions of Germans with hatred for the Soviet state, Communist ideas and everything the October Revolution stood for.

Now all that is past history. The Third Reich ceased to exist more than 20 years ago. It would seem that its "propaganda heritage" too should have been relegated to the limbo of the past. The Potsdam decisions called for precisely that. Yet the signs are that there is a new revival of anti-Communism and anti-Soviet propaganda west of the Elbe.

There is no doubt that broad sections of the West-German public feel a need to know the truth about the Soviet Union, its policy and its achievements. This need is particularly keenly felt now, in the jubilee year of the October Revolution. It would be a good thing from every point of view if the Bonn press would at long last make an effort to stem the flood of anti-Soviet, anti-Communist outpourings and carry unbiased, truthful information about Soviet life.

But nothing of the kind is happening. On the contrary, the turbid flood is rising. It seems there are those in Federal Germany who are bent on using the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet state to launch a new campaign against our country and against socialist revolution in general.

One can only marvel at the spectacle of venerable, "Sovietologists" mechanically repeating in 1967 what was said in 1917 or 1937. The same old fables are being dished out to the West-German reading public by the glossy magazines, the newspapers and by the authors of pseudo-historical books. Notable among the latter are such concoctions as Ladislaus Singer's "Rob That Which Has Been Robbed," a compendium of fabrications about the revolution, and the Menshevik Sukhanov's "1917. Diary of the Russian Revolution." It is symptomatic indeed that the Sukhanov memoirs, which Lenin ridiculed in his time, are now being pressed upon the West-German reader.

All this would be laughable if it were not tragic. The dangers the anti-Soviet smear campaign is fraught with are evident from the fact that it essentially pursues the same ends as Hitler when he sought to drum it into the Germans that the Bolsheviks were fiends responsible for all the evils in the world, and hence only fit to be wiped out.

In some respects the authors of the current anti-Soviet publications have outdone Goebbels. A case in point is a recent article by Kuno Brandel in *Die Welt*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine* and *Rheinische Post* claiming that the responsibility for Hitler's advent to power rests with the German Communists and the Soviet Union, who allegedly undermined the Weimar Republic by their combined efforts.

No one with any common sense can accept this monstrous argument. For the Soviet people, denial is superfluous. Regrettably, however, even this sort of nonsense is apt to mislead some West Germans. For many of them are not aware of the heroic struggle waged by the German Communists against Hitler in the thirties, or of the steadfast resistance to nazism offered by Soviet foreign policy from the moment Hitler emerged on the political arena. At any rate the organizers of the anti-Soviet campaign evidently count on finding people gullible enough to parrot Brandel (and Goebbels) and blame the Bolsheviks for everything.

Another variant of the nazi legend about the "wicked

Russians" was served up by the journal *Quick* in a feature averring that the wartime partisan movement of the Soviet people was the product of "provocation." Provocation by whom and how? According to the journal, the partisan movement was stirred up by the simple device of sending special Soviet detachments disguised in German uniform behind the German lines to slaughter civilians in order to arouse the wrath of the population.

We are certain that all right-minded people turn with revulsion from such calumny of the heroes of the Resistance. The whole world remembers the Nuremberg documents revealing that the mass extermination of the peaceful population of the Soviet Union was planned long before the war, in cold blood as befits professional killers, by Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich and others of their ilk. It was Heydrich's strong-arm men who donned foreign uniforms to perpetrate provocations such as the attack on the Gleiwitz radio station in 1939. Now the West-German neo-nazis or pro-nazis not only borrow from Hitler's arsenal but have the audacity to ascribe nazi methods to anti-fascists.

The organizers of the anti-Soviet campaign are nothing if not energetic. They are ever on the alert for anything that can be seized upon for the purposes of anti-Soviet slander. That Svetlana Alliluyeva was planning a book was still only a rumour when two leading illustrated journals—*Stern* (circulation two million) and *Der Spiegel* (nearly a million)—hastened to buy this more than questionable piece of goods. *Stern* offered 500,000 marks and *Spiegel* 480,000. *Quick*, lacking the means to pay for CIA concoctions, publishes articles about "what will not appear in Alliluyeva's memoirs." This device affords truly unlimited leeway for the most unconscionable flights of fantasy.

The Israeli aggression against the Arab states set off a new wave of anti-Soviet propaganda in the West-German press. Strangely enough, the aggression was acclaimed by the very same circles who once made the extermination of the Jews their credo. Commenting on this political paradox, the West-German journal *Konkret* observes that some Bonn politicians regard the Israeli action as an example for themselves.

In a special interview granted to *Die Welt*, Prime Minister Eshkol thanked Federal Germany for its assistance. The only thing he forgot to do was to express his gratitude to his Bonn confreres for the unbridled anti-Soviet slander campaign launched in Federal Germany during the Middle East crisis.

A prominent role in this campaign was played by the Springer newspaper concern, in particular by *Die Welt* and *Bild Zeitung*. They did what Goebbels did in his time—blamed everything on the Soviet Union. *Die Welt*, for

instance, argued that at the root of the conflict lay Soviet arms deliveries to the Arab countries. From the very beginning the newspapers raised a hue and cry about "Arab aggression" with the specific purpose of denigrating the Soviet Union. The tack failed, however, for it became clear at once that Israel was the attacker. Every effort was made to use the Middle East events to drive a rift between peoples, to confuse public opinion, and to discredit Soviet policy.

It has become the fashion in West Germany to look for new "elements and emphases" in the policy of the present Bonn government. We are told that although anti-Soviet sallies do take place, the government has nothing to do with them.

True enough, the Chancellor has not called the Soviet Union a "deadly enemy" of the German people, and the Defence Minister does not demand that the Soviet state be wiped off the face of the earth. But is this enough to release the Bonn leaders of all responsibility for the anti-Soviet propaganda in their country? The customary references to the "independence" and "freedom" of the press do not exonerate them.

The press, radio and TV in Federal Germany are largely monopoly-controlled. Public opinion is moulded by a few giant newspaper concerns. In the given instance they are acting against the interests of both Federal Germany and all other peoples by preventing the normalization of relations in Europe. If the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist hysteria continues it will lead to nothing good.

We have no wish to paint a picture of Federal German life in sombre colours only. We know that there are sound forces which are alarmed by things as they are, and we hold in high esteem those political leaders and journalists who seek to improve the climate and build good-neighbourly relations with our country. But so far they are a vilified minority. The Springer press, for instance, has declared war against the "anti-anti-Communists." Do our enemies really hope to turn Federal Germany into a gigantic Sportpalast of the thirties? There is reason to believe that they will not succeed. Times have changed.

Not long ago a prominent West-German leader said that it was time for the "hour of truth to strike" in Bonn. As regards the Federal Republic's attitude towards the Soviet Union, that hour should have struck long ago. It is high time for Bonn to see that anti-Soviet propaganda prevents normalization of relations between our countries, for under the circumstances the Soviet people can hardly place any faith in the present West-German leaders' professions of a desire to improve these relations and to help strengthen peace in Europe.